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UNITED STATES  
HALF DIMES:  
A SUPPLEMENT

by

WALTER BREEN

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JOHN J. FORD, JR., Editor

Commencing in January-February 1952, this Journal was published by the late Wayte Raymond as a complete monograph in itself. Subscribers obtained six issues for \$3.00 per year, but each title had a separate sales value as it was released and the price announced. This arrangement ceased with the Sept.-Oct., Nov.-Dec., 1954 issue. The first of these monographs, STRUCK COPIES OF EARLY AMERICAN COINS was No. 141; the last, THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE GOBRECHT COINAGES 1836-1840 was Nos. 157-158. Upon Mr. Raymond's death in 1956, two additional monographs were in preparation. One of these, SILVER COINAGES OF THE PHILADELPHIA MINT 1794-1916 was published in recent months. A complete list of these publications will be found priced on the back cover.

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WHOLE No. 160

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## FOREWORD

As the author so ably states in the opening paragraphs of this monograph, interest in both Half Dimes (particularly in connection with the collecting of die varieties) and the Dr. Valentine monograph on the series, has been neglected. The Valentine work, published by the American Numismatic Society, while long out of print, is still to be found. Used in conjunction with this supplement, containing as it does new discoveries, corrections, an attempt at rarity ratings and corrected quantities struck, it should prove a boon to the collector who rediscovers one of our more interesting silver denominations.

With this monograph, publication of the *Coin Collector's Journal*, as it was reborn under the auspices of Wayte Raymond twenty-four years ago, is concluded.

JOHN J. FORD, JR.

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Dr. D. W. Valentine's monograph on half-dimes, almost since its disappointing reception in 1931, has—together with the half-dime series itself—fallen victim to undeserved neglect. This neglect can be traced partly to the difficulties encountered in attributing small coins in general, especially when (as in 1829-73) the die differences are very minute, and partly to Valentine's refusal to give any hints as to rarity or value of the varieties. Now that collectors—at least the more intelligent among them—are becoming weary of the interminable commonplace modern regular issues and more weary of the speculators' trash labeled "commemoratives", there is some reason to expect that the die varieties of our early silver coins—like their copper counterparts—will at last begin to receive the appreciative attention they deserve. This is already happening with quarter dollars; one top grade R-7 (1804 B-2) has within recent years realized a high three figure price commensurate with its rarity. Silver dollars are also feeling the effects of this attention. In the belief that our early half-dimes deserve similar interest, I have compiled this supplement, which comprises the new discoveries, corrections, tentative rarity data so far as I have been able to determine them, corrected quantities struck, and other information which might aid the collector of this series.

1792. In frequency of appearance, this historic coin is a little scarcer than the 1805—on Sheldon's scale, probably an R-5, but of the most extreme rarity in Mint State. Probably the most desirable American small silver coin. Snowden (1860), Newlin (1883) and Valentine agreed in calling this a regular issue, but this is oversimplification. I have in a monograph on the U.S. 1792 Patterns given reasons for the conclusion that the 1792's were struck (probably from Washington's sterling which had been melted down, alloyed to 900 Fine, and cut into 1500-2000 planchets of standard weight and fineness) in October 1792 from dies made by Mint people, on a press made for Mint use, under auspices of Mint officials, in a building owned by John Harper a few blocks from the partly finished Mint; and that they were for circulation but



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could not have been issued from the Mint itself owing to a legal technicality.

Only one pair of dies is known to have been used for the 1792 coins. No die breaks. Usually found well worn, sometimes with "adjustment marks" (file marks in planchet before striking, to bring weight down to standard).

1794. All four varieties were struck in 1795. The very rare V-1 and problematical V-10 of 1795 both preceded 1794 V-4, which is the commonest of the four 1794 mulings. All of these were probably included in the 7,756 of March 30, 1795.

V-1. Wide date; double leaf at top of right branch. Valentine says 6 berries left, 7 right, but I can only see 6 on either branch, as could Newlin. This variety is very rare. It is reported to exist in Mint State (WGC 174) but I have not seen it. Newlin knew only six. Probably R-7, Sheldon scale.

V-2. Closer date; same reverse. Almost as rare as last. At least five known in Unc., for the same reason that 1796 dimes and quarters and 1793 wreath cents come Unc.: hoarding of first year of issue. Just one copper trial-piece exists (Winsor, Brand, New Netherlands Sale of Sept. 1953); it has plain edge. In silver, R-6.

V-3. Obv. as last (crowded date); rev. a berry almost touches I of UNITED. Same comment as last, and of about equal rarity. The copper trial-piece, AW16, is supposed to have reeded edge. In silver, also R-6, though Newlin knew only one (a V-3a).

V-4. Close date far from bust; F rests on a leaf. Various stages of die cracks, the last showing a rim break over four upper rt. stars (very rare). Commonest 1794; high R-4, rarer than a Chain AMERI cent but a trifle less rare than the 1799/8 cent.

1795. A difficult date, particularly as much confusion has existed over "unlisted" varieties. Only three varieties are commonly found (V-4, 5 and 6), the rest all being rare, some excessively rare. I will have to disregard the Valentine order to clear up the confusion and exhibit the varieties in a coherent emission sequence. Probably 78,660 coined.

V-1; B.1-A. First star between second and third curls; F rests on a leaf. Newlin 7. Without (RR) and with the obv. die crack described by Valentine. Struck before 1794 V-4. Ex. rare, none in WGC. Only records known to me: Eliasberg, EF, perfect dies; Neil 1506; Granberg Part II (Mehl Sale LIV, 1919), No. 424; Valentine Plate, cracked die. Newlin believed this die unique. Probably R-7.

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V-10; B.2-A. Not in Newlin; Steigerwalt 8. None seen. First star in usual position (between first and second curls), third curl touching second star; rev. F resting on leaf. R-8 if extant.

V-2; B.3-B. Date straight but 1 high, leans right; oddly shaped bust point, which comes up at an angle just right of 5 instead of continuing in the characteristic smooth curve. Usually cracked across, edge to R to hair to edge just right of lowest curl point. Rev. Berry under left foot of first A in AMERICA. Very rare, probably R-6.

V-3; B.4-B. Only six curls; 6th and 7th stars apart; heavy break, 11th to 14th stars. Rev. as last. Newlin saw only two specimens (N-5) among over 100 1795's examined, and I have heard of only one in recent years (WGC 181). R-7, plus.

V-9; B.5-B. Newlin 6; Valentine's description taken from Newlin but with typographical error in identifying reverse. Obv. of V-7. Only six curls; 6th and 7th stars too close together. Very wide date, 7 9 farthest apart. Rev. V-2, not V-5. Only one seen; Newlin: "unique."

V-7; B.5-C. Obv. as last. Rev. No berries below wings, inside or outside wreath. Unknown to Newlin. I know only the Valentine Plate coin, which has a heavy crack from between 7 9 to 95, bust point, three lower right stars to edge. Probably R-8.

V-8; B.6-C. Top of hair almost touches E; cracked across from left arm and foot of T through hair to point of lowest curl to edge. Rev. Same as last. Finest is Eliasberg's superb prooflike example, and I can trace only 2 or 3 others including Neil 1507. R-7.

V-5; B.7-C. L low, I B much too far apart. Often with crack from Y to nose (V-5a), sometimes with this extended through cheek, bust and 7 to edge (V-5b). Rev. Same as last. By far the commonest 1795; low R-3, possibly R-2.

V-6; B.7-D. Same obv., last state of cracks. Rev. Berry about touches right bottom of first S in STATES. A little scarcer; low R-4. A defaced copper trialpiece with reeded edge was found on the site of the First Mint and is now in Congress Hall. The defacement was done at the Mint to prevent this (like AW19 and others) from being silverplated and passed.

V-4; B.8-E. TY too low; B E apart; 15th star just touches tip of bust point. Rev. Outer berry between UN. Later develops crack over TY and 9th star, and subsequently a heavy rim break, with

crack through 9th to 12th stars. Probably second commonest; high R-3.

1796. Draped Bust. Mint record, 10,230. I suspect that many of these (possibly the entire delivery of March 30, 6,840 specimens) were dated 1795. Two die varieties; both have been called 1796/5, although the V-1 merely has a re-cut 6, and both varieties were misleadingly described by Newlin and Valentine. As a date, the 1796 is rarer than the 1794 in all grades.

V-1. In date, 1 punched over base of lowest curl; knobbed 6, its upper part double punched. LI and ER very closely spaced. Rev. Berry under D. Leaf touches final A. Die crack between TA. The commoner of two varieties; R-5? Usually encountered in worn condition; the best I know is Eliasberg's, long called a "proof".

V-2. The 1796/5. In date, 1 not touching curl; 6 without knob, but with 5 plainly underneath. The point of the 5 touches bust, the 6 a little away. E R quite far apart. Rev. Berry under right half of E in UNITED, not D. Leaf touches C, not A. Cracked from second T in STATES through leaves, eagle, cloud, right stem end, to border. Ex. rare, certainly R-7. Of possibly six examples known, at least five are in EF to Unc. condition, a situation matched by only the 1876-CC 20¢ and 1822 25/50 quarter so far as I know.

1797. Mint record, 44,527. This has been tentatively broken down as follows: Fifteen stars (V-2), 18,144; sixteen stars (V-3, 4), 16,620; thirteen stars (V-1), 9,763. This order is obvious: fifteen-star dies were left over from 1795-6; the sixteen-star die was made after the entry of Tennessee into the Union in 1796; the permanent shift to 13 stars followed the realization that one could not continue to add stars indefinitely as new states entered the Union. This situation is similarly reflected in the dimes, halves, dollars, and early gold.

Fifteen stars. V-2. Date punches as in 1795 V-4, suggesting that this die was made in 1795 (like 1796 V-2) but with last figure of date omitted for possible use in a later year. By a small margin the least rare of the 1797's; R-3. Later shows various stages of die cracks.

Sixteen stars. V-3. Date punches of 1796, but second 7 larger. Perfect die, or with slight crack between 7th and 8th stars. Rev. Outer berry under D. Rare, probably high R-5.

Same; V-4. Same obverse; rev. of V-2. No berry under D; outer berry between NI. Not known to Newlin, and formerly thought very rare, but three or four choice ones have turned up. Probably R-5. Usually with obv. die badly injured from contact with

a reverse; heavy traces of wreath, eagle, clouds, etc., around head: shattered reverse.

Thirteen stars; rev. leaf touches final S in STATES at right bottom. V-1. Rare, probably borderline R-6 or higher. Unknown in Mint State since Newlin's day; the two best I know are the Eliasberg and Valentine Plate coins, both Ex. Fine at best. Large 7's; evidently this die was made after the others.

**1800.** Heraldic Eagle. Both dies of this year, the single 1802 obverse, and the Large Date obverse of 1803 (V-1, V-2) have a peculiar 8 which seems to have been made by punching two small circles into the die separately but so that they would overlap slightly. The two 1801 obverses and the 1805 die have a crudely formed narrow 8 looking like what a schoolboy might produce; the 1803 Small Date obverse (V-3) has a better formed one. None of these 8's appears on any other denomination. Of the Heraldic half-dimes only the two 1800 varieties ever seem to come in Mint State, the other dates being of extreme rarity above Fine.

V-1. Perfect R. Rev. First S equidistant between wing and T. Reverse sometimes shows a crack from edge through I of UNITED, azure of shield, wing and M. Later (V-1a) obverse develops a rim break below 00 of date. Several Mint State examples in all stages. Mint Report, 24,000. Borderline R-3.

V-2. LIBEKTY; peculiar broken R. Stars more closely spaced, especially at left; they are farther from curls, L and Y. Same reverse die, and cracked the same; generally with a heavy injury at BUS on scroll as on Valentine Plate, though Valentine does not mention either the injury or the crack. I have reason to believe that these V-2's were the 16,000 struck at the beginning of 1801. High R-3.

**1801.** Probably the most difficult date in the series, and certainly the most underrated. Mint Report, 33,910; but if we accept the hypothesis (from hiatus evidence) that the 16,000 struck at the beginning of this year were 1800 V-2's, and that the 9,950 struck at the beginning of 1802 (right after the last 1801's) were dated 1801, and that the 1802-dated half dimes comprised merely the 3,060 of the end of that year, and that no hoards have been found (i.e. that time has made about equal inroads on the numbers struck and remaining of each date), then we get about the correct ratio of number extant to number struck, which ratio generally remains constant for a given denomination. In the cents this worked out to the "Three Percent Rule" mentioned in my monograph on Minor Coinages 1793-1916. In half-cents, this yields a variable figure owing to "finds" of 1806 and 1828, but for other Early Dates it is



just about 0.7%, 1794-1803. For silver dollars it is approximately 4%, 1794-1803; I have not worked this ratio out for halves, quarters or dimes, but so far for half-dimes it appears to be a shade over 1%, 1794-1805. A far better "fit" to the ratio is obtained by making the assumptions just given—1800 24,000; 1800 V-2 16,000; 1801 27,760; 1802 3,060, the italicized figures being "probable reconstructions" as in the *Minor Coinages* monograph. The "law" itself is almost self-evident: Where no hoards have been found, and where no selective melting has taken place, the ratio—Number Extant: Number Coined—is approximately constant for a given period in a single denomination. It has been intuitively used by collectors for many years, where they cited mintages as criteria of rarity. The law applies in general to American coins ca. 1793-1825 with the obvious exceptions: Randall Hoard cents, Chapman Hoard half-cents, half-eagles 1819-34 which were melted in large quantity, etc.

V-1. In date, 1 touches curl. Rev. Leaf runs into C in AMERICA, not touching the A. Obverse rapidly breaks down: Flaw in field right of face; this becomes a crack from Y to lowest star to bust; this becomes a heavy break obliterating part of Y and most of the stars. Reverse now badly injured, "blunted". Newlin 1; unknown in condition above VF. Very rare, nearly R-6, possibly within that level.

V-2. Very similar obverse, but 1 does not touch curl; 13th star a little farther from bust. Reverse as last. This die also breaks down rapidly: rust pits around 180; crack, then heavy break under bust point a couple of mm. right of date; crack through IBERT, injury over RT (Eliasberg coin) which later looks like a rim break; die giving way at 18 and above; heavy break at 18 to bust (the only one Valentine knew) which almost obliterates those digits; arc break from this last break through curls up to B (Menjou 95). WGC 202 was supposedly a perfect die coin but I have not seen it. Formerly considered much rarer than V-1 but a number of specimens from Poor (the average condition) to Good have turned up. R-5. Only two seen above VF, the best being the so-called "DuPont" and Eliasberg coins. This variety discovered by J. W. Haseltine ca. 1883 (W. H. Smith Coll.). The description in Valentine indicates that he had only a poor specimen to work with.

1802. Probably 3,060 coined; despite the Mint Report of 13,010, long known as a rarity and generally considered the rarest date of half-dime. Usually exaggerated in rarity and condition. Though only one die variety exists, detailed description is necessary because of the appearance of highly deceptive counterfeits, one of



which appears in the Mint Collection, another in the Appleton Coll., now in Mass. Hist. Society, others being reported.

V-1. Obv. Large 8 as in 1800; 18 closely spaced, 1 not touching curl; 2 leans left, touches bust, and is shaped like the 2 in the half-cent. R below E; TY below R. Rev. is same die as 1801; leaf touches C, not A, and first S nearer to T than to wing. No die breaks observed, but reverse "blunted" as in 1801; usually better struck than is the 1801. Weight 20.8 grains. The counterfeits seem to have been made from perfect-die examples of 1801 V-1, and have the **small** 8, with an oddly shaped 2; they usually show traces of being two **silver** shells joined, with or without false reeding, and are a little thicker than the genuine. They ring almost as well as the genuine, as is characteristic of the famed Crosby electrotypes (of such coins as 1831 to '52 half-cents, the Roman Head Washington, etc.); and some authorities believe that Crosby made these. The features described as of the genuine 1802 suffice to detect alterations from any other date.

The genuine 1802 rates Rarity 5, a figure which may surprise many collectors who have been accustomed to reading "Only 16 known." In 1883, Newlin was able to trace sixteen different examples, the first one (VG) having brought \$340 in the Lilliendahl sale of December 1863 as "one of only three known." Of the 16 known to Newlin, L. G. Parmelee had at one time or another supposedly owned four. The one which finally went with his collection in 1890, No. 798, at \$205 as EF was called Unc. by Newlin and not earlier traced, though I think it might have been the Gambo—W. P. Brown—Redlich—Sampson coin which was bought by Parmelee as "VF" and had been discovered by W. P. Brown in a lot of old silver coins brought in by a Negro named Gambo ca. 1877. This Parmelee piece was later owned by H. P. Smith, W. F. Dunham and W. W. Neil. Besides this one, there are two or three others that can be graded as EF to Unc. One of them is the Valentine Plate coin, with light obverse edge damage. Another (the same piece?) is the W. E. Woodward—J. B. Wilson—H. O. Granberg—W. C. Atwater coin. Another, which is said to be equal to the Valentine Plate coin, is the Dr. Black piece. In the Garrett collection at Johns Hopkins is one described as "EF" ex Betts, Ferguson Haines, J. E. Burton and Newlin. Possibly three others are known in VF; the remainder range from Poor to V. Good. Macallister in 1935 knew at least 35 different ones, most of them "very worn". I have seen at least fifteen of these, and R-5 is (all things considered) a more probable figure than R-6.

1803. Another difficult date, despite a mintage of 37,850. The

existence of a small and a large date in this year seems to have escaped the notice of collectors.

V-3; N-3. B.1-A. **Small Date.** The 8 is smaller than the 1, and smaller than in the 1800-01-02 dies. Rev. of 1801-1802; leaf touches C. Perfect die (RRR; Eliasberg); usually with rim breaks at 8th star and below bust point to right of date. Borderline R-7. The Eliasberg and Valentine Plate coins are the only fine ones known to me. Newlin rated it "next to the 1805" which itself was exceeded in rarity only by the 1792 and 1802. I believe he underrated it; it is certainly rarer than any of the three dates named.

V-1; N-1. B.2-A. **Large Date.** Large 8 similar to 1800. Rev. As last; leaf on C. No die breaks seen, but most examples are poorly struck and quite worn. None seen in Mint State. Probably R-5.

V-2; N-2. B.2-B. Rev. of 1805. Obv. as last, large date; reverse with leaf touching final A, not C. This die is very similar to the 1800 reverse but has first S nearer T than wing. Probably R-3. Commonest 1803 but still a scarce coin, and rare in Mint State. Eliasberg has an Unc. example with triple profile.

**1805.** Generally regarded as second rarest regular issue half-dime; 15,600 minted. Like the 1802, usually over-rated in both rarity and condition.

V-1. Date and execution similar to 1801; small misshapen 8 as in that year. Rev. Same as 1803 V-2. Obverse almost always weakly struck with details of hair not up. The Atwater coin supposedly has a die break from 5 to border, but I have not seen it. Generally weak on upper right reverse. Parmelee's, AU, and the Eliasberg and Atwater coins, EF or so, are apparently the best ones reported. R-4; about as rare as the 1799 8 cent. The reason for the discontinuance of half-dimes in this year is not clear but there seems to have been little demand for them at any time. Coinage, once stopped, did not resume until July 4, 1829.

**1829.** Draped bust left as on the half-dollars. Beaded borders, as on 1828 dimes and no earlier coins since 1793 cents and half-cents. There are 14 varieties of this date, but some of them were struck in 1830 or 1831, as proved by die break evidence. The 14 varieties divide into two well-marked types, triple stripes (gules) on shield (V-2, 3, 7) and double stripes (all the others, 1829-37). It would require far too much space to give detailed descriptions of all die varieties, and therefore the section to follow will comprise (1) Notes on "type" coins; (2) Notes on rarities and proofs; (3) Description of the unlisted varieties through 1835; (4) Miscellaneous data not available to Valentine.

In 1829 there were quite a number of proofs struck, most of them from triple-stripe dies: V-2, 3, 7; others from dies of V-6, V-8 and the variety called "B-13" below. The triple-stripe coins in Unc. are not much rarer than the other varieties, but as a group they form a smaller part of the population of 1829's (three varieties as against eleven) than the double-stripe coins, and should probably catalogue higher.

B-13. Obv. V-2; Rev. V-6. Earliest state of dies; 5 C recut at bases. Unique proof in Eliasberg collection. Neil 1522 may have been this variety?

B-14. Obv. V-9; Rev. 1830 V-3. Obverse shows faint cracks through 5th and 6th, and double cracks through 11th to 13th, stars; also injuries from stripes of shield on face, etc. Reverse perfect die. Two seen; Eliasberg and New Netherlands' *Numisma*, No. 679, where a typographical error made this "Obv. V-1".

1830. Proofs are of great rarity; V-5, 8, 10. The Eliasberg V-5 and the Bullova May 1952 V-8 are the only proofs of these dies encountered, though others are reported. I know only two proof V-10's. To avert possible confusion, 1829 V-8 and 1830 V-8 and V-9 have the same reverse die; 1830 V-10 has reverse of 1829 V-12a, not "1829 No. 10". The 1830 V-5 proof must have been struck in 1831 since the reverse die comes in an earlier state with 1831 V-2 obverse (the combination called 1831 V-6).

V-9. Obverse later cracks heavily from cap to border near 8th star.

1831. Proofs are found of V-1, 3, 4, 5; the V-4 and V-5 slightly less rare than the other two (R-7 as against R-8). Many are called proofs that do not deserve the name.

V-1b. Reverse cracked just as in 1835 V-2. Probably struck in 1833. Many of these old dies were carried over to the Second Mint and re-used, which is why in both cents and half-dimes many 1829-32 reverses are used again between 1833 and 1835 (the Second Mint was first occupied in 1833).

V-5. Real proofs (Wurtzbach, Eliasberg, etc.) have perfect reverse die; wing joins arrow shaft; scratch in die from point of top leaf to wing to space towards N.

1832. One proof seen of V-1; two of V-8; two others reported but not attributed. The V-3 and B-10 constitute a "type": **No Berries**. This type is very rare, the V-3 being R-7 and the B-10 (obv. V-8, rev. V-3), borderline R-8. There are coins such as the V-1, 5b, 6, 7, on which the berries are weak and small but still



visible; on the V-3 and B-10 they are wholly obliterated owing to die wear.

V-1. The defect in second T in STATES is not seen on the genuine proof.

V-5b. Shattered reverse; dozens of other cracks, the heaviest being from edge to E in UNITED, ribbon, E in motto, beak, etc.

B-10. Obv. V-8; Rev. V-3. The three seen of this variety are all in AU to Unc., and the five or six V-3's known are in EF to Unc. No Berries. The V-8 obverse has first star farther from bust and pointing to center of a head whereas on the V-3 it points between heads. No trace of the cracks of V-9.

B-11. Obv. V-3; Rev. 1831 V-1a. Unique. Probably struck in 1833.

B-12. Obv. V-1, perfect and later cracked twice from cap to border; rev. early state of V-8. Two seen; R-8.

1833. Unique proof of V-1 is in Eliasberg collection. The only halfway scarce varieties of this year are V-2 and V-7. V-1 always has border excessively heavy and high. F. D. Longenheim owned one described as oversize; see *Numismatist*, Nov. 1927, p. 690; Dec. 1927, p. 744. Not seen; authenticity doubtful.

1834. V-3. Obv. crack is much heavier than on V-1a. Reverse shows third stroke of M in AMERICA gone, and the die somewhat worn down.

V-4. Quite a number of these are known in proof; of the 1829-37 type this is the easiest to obtain in proof next to the 1829's. Perfect reverse die on the proofs. On later business strikes a crack sometimes shows at 7th star.

B-6. Obv. V-4; perfect die. Rev. Very similar to V-4, but shows no defect in N of UNITED; RI quite close together but not touching; E in STATES low; heavy defect on right part of first A in AMERICA; crack from base of final A to arrow. Unique proof in Mint Coll., No. 1011; this probably preceded the V-4, the reverse breaking up.

1835. Large date and 5 C: V-2, 3, 4, 8 and B-11. Large date, small 5 C: V-9, 10. Small date, large 5 C: V-5, 6. Small date and 5 C: V-1, 7. Proofs of V-1, 2, 5, 7, all high R-7.

V-1 should read: One arrow head touches shaft.

V-4b. Heavy break through 9th to 12th stars.

B-11. Obv. V-10, perfect die; large date, 18 low. Rev. Large 5 C., the very short tip of 5 almost touching feather, the top of C joined to stem. N in UNITED defective in upper part. E in

UNITED above T D at base, and far from D. Left serif of final S over center of S in motto. UN slightly left of OF. OF even at bases and spaced apart. A M well apart; MERI close but not touching. R a little low. Crack, right base of D to scroll above L. Two known; Mint Coll., No. 1012, and Brand-New Netherlands' *Numisma*, No. 705. R-8.

1836. Small 5 C: V-1, 2, 3, 6. Large 5 C: V-4, 5. Proofs of V-1 (Eliasberg), V-5.

V-4a. Crack, edge to cap (near 8th star) to curls. Earlier states show base of C in 5 C. recut. The V-4a first seen in Eliasberg Coll.

V-6a. Both dies severely injured by contact; break from 6th star to L of LIBERTY. Eliasberg. The frequently seen "Recut 3" advertisements refer to the V-2, V-6 obverse, which almost always shows the recutting.

1837. Bust type, 871,000 coined; three die varieties. The change to the Liberty Seated device occurred July 25, and 1,405,000 pieces were struck. Of the Busts, V-3 comes in proof (about four reported); of the Liberty Seated, V-1, 2 (which see).

V-2. Small 5 C. Generally seen in EF to Unc. High R-5, nearly R-6.

V-2a. Crack now plainer, extended from edge through cap, cheek, neck, to border just left of date.

V-3b. Crack now extended to rim over L and down to rim right of 7; recutting still shows at 7. Rev. C in value connected to stem by break. Neil 1582 was a proof, probably of V-3, described as double-cut date. If a V-3, then this is a different state from all others, as the three proofs I have seen show recutting only on the 7.

Liberty Seated. V-1, 2, 3 have the "large" date; V-4, 5, 6 the "small" (rarer). The main difference: The "large" date has the punches used on 1837 Bust type; the "small", those of 1838. They are most easily recognized by the shape of the 1: it is narrow with a tall peak above the serif on the "large" date, wider with flat thick serif and no peak on the "small". About two dozen proofs known of V-1; 20 "specimens" sent to the Secretary of the Treasury when coinage began July 25, 1837. Eliasberg has a proof V-2, early stage. The notched leaf and double-punched letters of 1837 V-2 are not individual to this working die; they are in the hub but were corrected on the first few dies, later wearing down. Other varieties have been reported. A. G. Heaton (*Mint Marks*, 1893) reports discovery of two worn 1837 "O" coins in New Orleans. These have not been seen, nor is there any mention of such coinage in any Archives documents.

1838 "O". V-2, if it exists, is extremely rare. I have seen one corroded example (an Eliasberg duplicate) which may be this variety; date apparently slants up to right. There were 115,000 coined from an unknown number of dies; 35,000 in the fall of 1838, the remainder early in 1839 before the 1839 dies arrived, making this the smallest half-dime mintage in the New Orleans mint series (1853 "O" is rarer, but there were 160,000 coined; most of them were melted later on.). The V-1 also comes with uncracked dies; and later, with obverse cracks from edge to arm holding shield, through bust to hand holding pole; from edge to top of cap; edge to field near cap; reverse now without breaks. Mint Coll., No. 1018; Neil 3 (May 1927 *Numismatist*). A. G. Heaton mentions an 1838 "O" **with** stars and small O, as in 1839, but no other record exists. The regular 1838 "O" is extremely rare in Mint State. I have seen two that I can call VF; one is the Valentine Plate coin, whereabouts now unknown. Several others exist in Fine; the majority of this issue will average Good to V. G. In Louisiana they passed for half bits, i.e. 1/16 of the Mexican dollar or 6¼ cents. V-1, without exaggeration, can be rated R-4; the other varieties, if authentic, probably R-8.

For information on proofs, 1838-57, see my monograph on proofs.

1839 "O". Large O (V-1) and small o, the large very rare. Six pairs of dies used.

1840 "O". Large, medium and small mintmark without drapery (V-1; V-2; V-3, 4, etc.); small only, with drapery (V-5), last quite rare. The single pair of dies with drapery were shipped Dec. 2, 1840. No information yet available on the numbers coined without and with drapery of either Philadelphia or N.O. mint silver.

1841. Have never seen V-1 in other than proof condition.

1841 "O". Six obv., five rev. dies from Philadelphia. Valentine lists four varieties, V-1 and 2 small o, V-3 and 4 medium O. Heaton, Neil No. 4, Neil Sale #1711, all mentioned a large O; not seen, and evidently rare. A third small o variety is in Eliasberg Coll. The five known varieties and the sixth reported (the large O) agree well with the die account.

1842 "O". Small o only; five pairs of dies.

1843. One of the unlisted varieties which come in proof has triple cut date. I have seen only two of these.

1844. V-1, 2, 3 and two unlisted varieties all come in proof; one of the latter has first 4 re-cut.



1844 "O". Three pairs of dies. V-2, with small o, is rare.

1845. V-1. This comes in proof without as well as with the crack through U. There are several unlisted varieties, one of them in proof (Mint Coll., No. 1027). Another has double date, first cut far to left; R-7.

V-5. "1845/43." Neil's variety No. 3; Neil Sale, lot 1612; Menjou 114; Newcomer 2269, ex Newcomb, ex H. Chapman. The Newcomer inventory claimed only two were known of this. The plate does not show the "overdate" too clearly. Whatever it is, it is not a mere re-cut date. No. 32, NSB list of overdates, Feb. 1955.

1846. V-1 is the die used on regular business strikes. Shield point over right edge of 1; none yet seen Unc. Neil Sale, Lot 1614: "Abt. Unc." Low R-3; 27,000 coined.

B-2. Similar, but shield point left of 1. Proofs only; probably high R-6. Newcomer 2271; Mint Coll., No. 1028; Atwater 1154; Neil 1613; Menjou 115; Eliasberg; etc., etc. I have seen at least ten different ones.

1848. Large (V-1; date overruns base) and medium date only; no true small date known. One unlisted die (Eliasberg) has 48 first cut far to left, then re-cut properly.

1848 "O". Six pairs of dies. Large O (V-1; B-3: Obv. V-2, rev. V-1—Eliasberg.). Medium O (V-2). Small o (B-4: Obv. V-2, rev. new.). The latter has similar mintmark to the 1844 "O" V-2, and is also from the Eliasberg collection; I have seen no duplicate. Neil (May 1927 *Numismatist*) described two other varieties, one with small o, one with large O.

1849. The 1849/8, correctly so called, is V-4 or V-5 (apparently different states of the same obverse), and is scarce, the V-5 state quite rare. There are also some varieties, most notably V-3, which merit the designation 1849/6 (i.e. 9 over inverted 9) Part of loop and sometimes part of tail of the "6" visible within the 9. This is less scarce than the 1849/8. Several unlisted varieties exist.

1850. B-6. Obv. V-1; Rev. V-2, with the crack through TES found on some V-2 proofs. Eliasberg Coll.

B-7. Obv. V-5. Rev. No cracks; H joined to leaf.

V-2 appears to come only in proof (R-7); V-1 and 4 are rarely encountered.

V-3. Rev. Straight scratch in die from border between D S to leaf, almost touching berry under D.

1850 "O". Large O (V-1, 2); medium O (V-3); small o (V-4). Last evidently an old die as it shows many rust pits. There

were eleven old half-dime reverses left over from previous years at New Orleans in 1850, this presumably being one of them. Six obverses and no new reverses sent from Philadelphia.

1851. V-1. Proofs have file scratches in die (faint) over AMERIC. High R-7. It is known that seven obverses and five reverses were prepared for this date but there is no evidence that they were all used. Coinage of all silver denominations, 1850 to March 1853, was curtailed because the coins were worth more than face and were likely to find their way to the melting pots for exportation as bullion.

1851 "O". Twelve obvs., six reverses—but evidently not all actually used in coinage.

1852. Four obvs., six reverses.

1852 "O". Six obverses, but apparently only one used—with a left-over old reverse.

1853 Without arrows. One pair of dies, 135,000 coined, and most of them remelted as worth over face after the Act of Feb. 21, 1853. A number of them were kept as souvenirs and so this variety, though decidedly scarce (probably low R-3), is generally available in or near Mint State for a price.

1853 "O" Without arrows. Only a single variety seen; always weak at date. R-5; very rare in Mint State. Though 160,000 were coined, practically the entire mintage was remelted, as was true of the higher denominations 1851-53. The New Orleans Mint sent over \$1 million in silver to Philadelphia in the fall of 1853 for recoinage. \$100 old tenor = \$108.33 in new coins with arrows.

1853 Arrows. V-4 reported in proof; R-8. Valentine's attempt to describe varieties is futile; 78 obverses, 80 reverses, not counting intermulings. Largest coinage in the series, more than the entire half-dime coinage from 1794 to 1833.

1853 "O". Eighteen obverses. Heaton describes a variety with break through 3 resembling "3 over 1", and calls it "Ex. Rare." This is evidently V-2.

1854 "O". Eight obvs., four revs.

1855. Seventeen obvs., 16 revs. Many coins of this date as well as 1856-7-8 have denticles poorly struck up.

1855 "O". Six obvs., four revs. There were also sent to the San Francisco Mint in 1853, 1854 and 1856 each two pairs of half-dime dies, but this denomination was not struck at that mint before 1863.

1856. Thirty-one pairs of dies. Neil Sale, lot 1648, at \$10, described a proof (?) of this date with **large** date said to have been re-cut over 1854. This is difficult to believe, and I omitted it from the NSB list of overdates (February 1955) for that reason. Will the owner of this coin please get in touch with me?

1856 "O". Six obverses. Have never seen the small o described as V-5.

B-6. Obv. V-4; Rev. V-1. Eliasberg.

B-7. Similar to V-2, but no crack; re-cut date and stars. Eliasberg.

1859 **Transitional pattern.** Obv. not one of the regular dies used in 1859; rev. has not been identified on any 1860 or later proofs. AW309. Low R-6, possibly R-5, Sheldon scale. Proof only.

1860 **Transitional pattern.** Obv. with stars, type of 1859; rev. type of 1860-73, but different die from last or from regular issues. Very heavy lettering. Often reported to come in proof, but none seen in any condition other than Unc. Snowden (Mint Manual) says 100 coined; he would know, because he was Mint Director when the things were made, and they were made to satisfy collector demands for something new and rare.

1861. Forty-two obvs., 43 revs.

1862. Twenty-one pairs of dies. At least four varieties known in proof.

1863. Apparently only one pair of dies used; 18,000 plus 460 proofs. Very rare Unc.

1864. Originals, one pair of dies; 1,000 regular business strikes and 470 proofs. The business strikes were apparently made early in 1865. Only four Unc. and one or two damaged examples seen in addition to the proofs. As Unc., R-7; as proof, R-3.

1864 Copper restrike. Upper part of D in UNITED gone. The die was evidently made after the beginning of 1871; the hub is worn exactly as on the 1871-73 obverses. AW449. Also reported in nickel and aluminum (AW448, 450).

1865. Two pairs of dies; 12,000 plus 500 proofs. Of extreme rarity in Unc., not proof. Same is true for all of the Philadelphia half-dimes, 1863-67, inclusive.

1865 "S". In Frossard's sale of the Friesner collection, 1894, lot 794 was described as 1865/63 "S". It brought \$2 in Fine, which was then a very high price. Inadvertently omitted from the NSB list of overdates; but not seen.



1866. V-1. Pendant over second 6; shield point about over tip of serif of 1. Rev. Heavy HALF DIME. Proofs only, so far as seen.

B-2. Pendant between 66; shield point well to left of 1; letters in AMERICA filled. Rev. Thin letters; ribbon ends clear, right one distant. Proof. Eliasberg.

1868. V-2 also comes in proof. Eliasberg.

1868 "S". V-1c. Shattered and flattened dies.

1869. V-2. Re-cut date, the recutting not clear. Proof. Eliasberg.

1869 "S". V-2. On early examples 18 shows re-cutting. Eliasberg.

Between 1869 and 1873 there are numerous unlisted varieties, some of them mulings, others new dies. Valentine neglected to use the position of the date with respect to the skirt pendant (ball ornament, over the 7 in 1870 coins, etc.) and shield point, and as a result several dies can answer to his description of one. It would be tedious to try to describe them all here. There are also other patterns besides the two he mentions of 1870; and all the Philadelphia dates, 1863-73, come in other metals. The number of dies involved is limited enough so that completion might be hoped for. It is unfortunate that too few have been observed as yet to suggest reliable rarity ratings.

Valentine had the makings of a first-rate monograph, particularly for the 1792-1837 period, but he published too soon. This supplement may possibly make up for some of the inadequacies which twenty-seven years have demonstrated; if so, it has served its purpose.

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